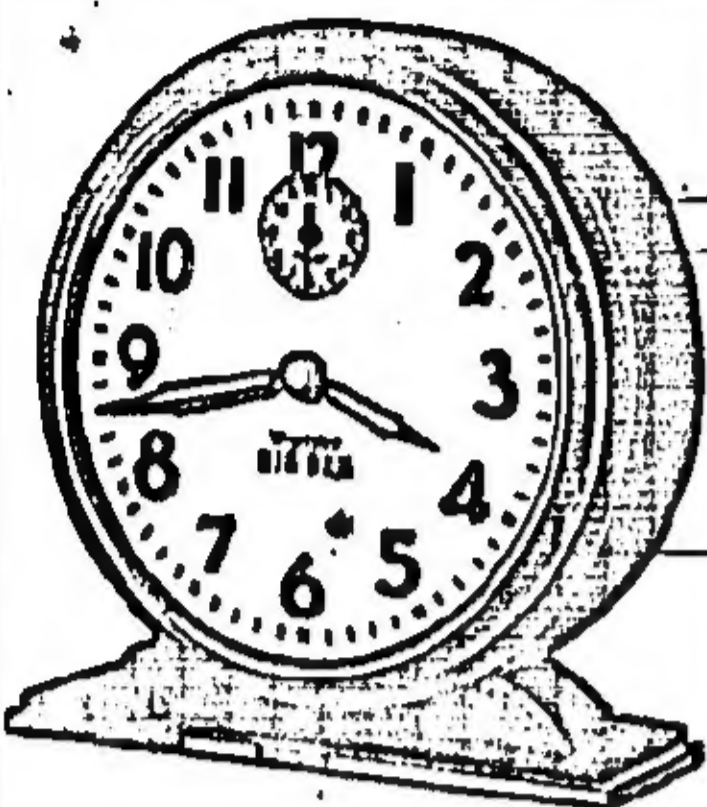


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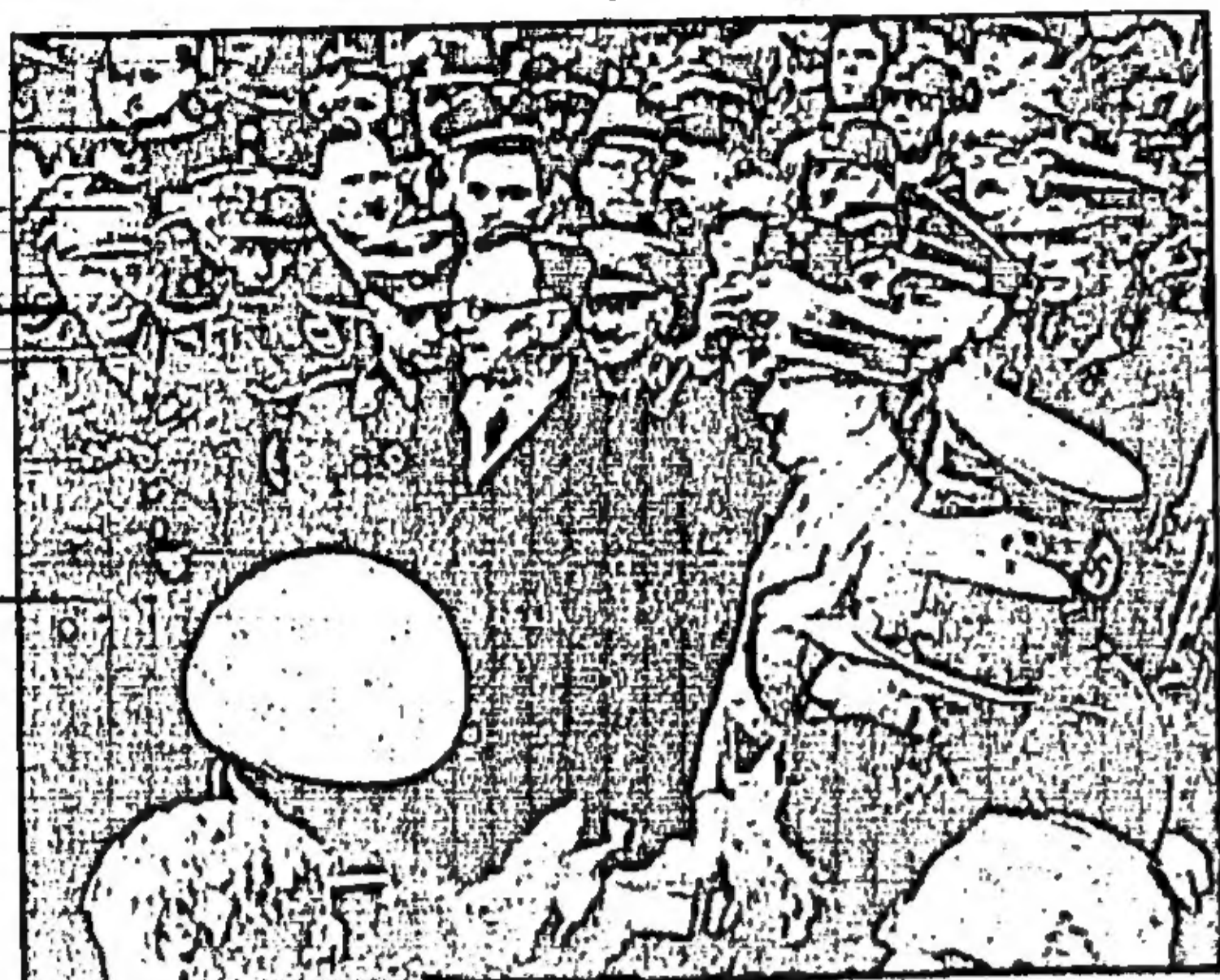
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Labour And The Axis



DR. SEYSS-INQUART (centre) with Herr Hitler, celebrating after the mailed fist victory. Dr. Seyss-Inquart, is the new puppet Governor-General of Austria.

CROWDS were marching through London's streets recently shouting the cry "Save Austria." The danger lies nearer. It is time to think of "saving" our own island.

Two events last month were combined with remarkable precision. The Führer marched into Vienna, General Franco began his march on Barcelona.

The notion that we face two hungry and restless Powers, acting each for itself, which spring a series of disconnected crises upon us has got to be discarded.

We face an "axis," as the Dictators significantly call it, round which all Europe now turns at their will. Once, perhaps, it was breakable. To-day, after the test in Austria, it is demonstrably solid. Few formal alliances in history have been as solid and effective.

It has already won for Germany complete ascendancy in Middle Europe. It has nearly won for the Roman Empire the mastery of the Mediterranean.

Two peoples, and only two, refuse to revolve as satellites round this axis, the republican Spaniards and the Czechs.

NIGHTER THAN NAPOLEON

If they are allowed to go down unaided, then isolated and alone

Franco can win outright as a tool and vassal of the Axis: what then?

IN GERMAN HANDS

Again, we know the Tory answer over Spain. It is the comfort of weak men blinded by class consciousness. It runs thus: "Franco really loves us best (which explains why he sinks our ships). He will want a loan from the City."

Moreover, the Italians have promised to walk out when "the Reds are smashed." This is the talk of comfortable men too lazy to face realities.

If Mussolini has risked men, planes, and an untold value of munitions to smash this democratic republic, he will expect his reward and see that he gets it.

What, then, are we to do, we and the French? First, concentrate on what is attainable and still defensible. We must be realists with mental discipline enough to face the hard military realities.

We cannot at the moment save either Austria or China. As the argument in this column has run for many months, we can still save the Spaniards and the Czechs, but only by a supreme and united effort.

If we mean to save Spain, we have only a few days or weeks to do it in.

BATTLEFIELD OF SPAIN

Let us remember that we are facing, not Hitler, Mussolini or Franco alone, but this Axis, this alliance. Where is it weakest? In Spain, for it can send its men and munitions only by sea.

Where are the Western Powers strongest? Again, in Spain. For together, though it may not be for long, they still command these seas. Further, the French have with Spain a common frontier, while Middle Europe is out of reach.

Even if we felt no admiration and sympathy for this gallant people, it is to Spain that every consideration of self-interest and strategic calculation calls us.

The Franco trick, if it succeeds in Spain, may be repeated in France. The Cagoulard plot was the first essay.

MOMENT FOR ACTION

Over the first step we all agree. Mr. Attlee spoke well in the House, and so did Sir Archibald Sinclair. The Republic is being overwhelmed, not by the valour of Fascist troops, whether Spanish, Moorish or Italian, but solely by interventionist planes and guns.

It is a moment not for despair, but for action. Spaniards are a stubborn race, who can rally in a dark hour, as they did when Madrid was all but lost.

But unless, at last, we counter this invasion by giving brave men the means to defend themselves, the Republic will go under. The French would do it, and would have done it long ago, but for British resistance. That we have to overcome.

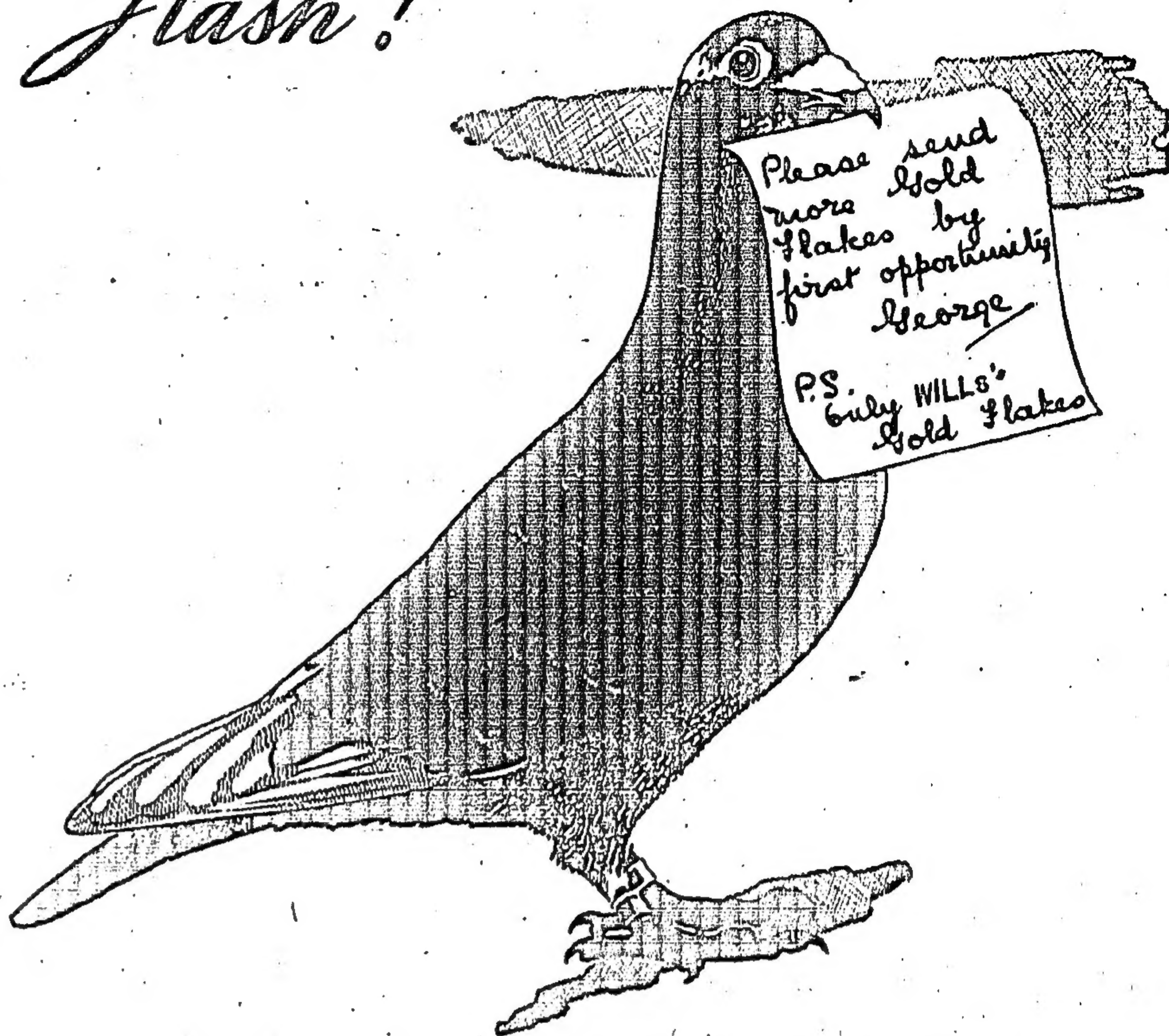
There is no hope unless we can extort from Mr. Chamberlain a pledge to stand by France to day if she pours in arms to Spain.

A plain warning that Britain will make a stand against further aggression offers the sole chance of averting it.

But Mr. Chamberlain will learn

(3) But Spain presents the most, nothing, say nothing, and do nothing picture. Assume that nothing.

Flash!



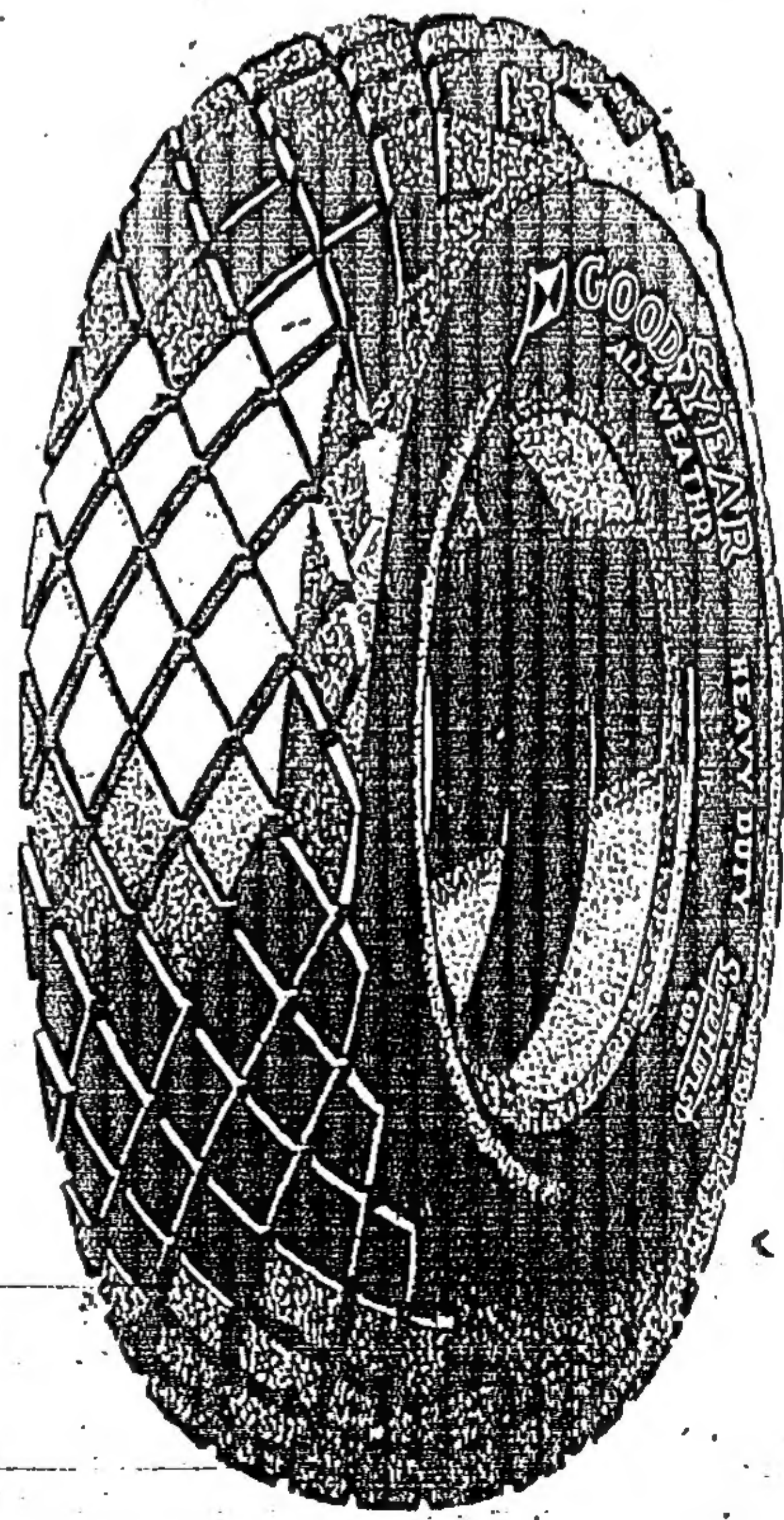
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